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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S 6/2 MEETING WITH FM QIRBI: U/S BOLTON
VISIT; JUDICIAL, ECONOMIC REFORM

REF: SANAA 1170

Classified By: Charge Alan G. Misenheimer for reason 1.5 (d).

¶11. (C) Summary: In a 6/2 meeting with Ambassador, FM Qirbi said he looked forward to visiting WDC, possibly with Interior Minister Alimi for policy discussions. He welcomed Ambassador's readout of the FBI Director's meeting with Saleh earlier the same day. Ambassador briefed Qirbi on the upcoming visit of U/S Bolton, underscoring the importance of positive Yemeni action on Article 98 and cooperation with the DPRK. On terrorist financing, the Ambassador argued that Moayed should cooperate with U.S. investigators and urged the ROYG to designate a legitimate channel (vice the al-Aqsa Foundation) of Yemeni public support for Abu Mazen and the PA. End Summary.

FBI Director Mueller's Visit

¶12. (C) Ambassador, accompanied by DCM, called on FM Abubaker al-Qirbi at his home late in the evening of 6/2. Qirbi was joined by Special Assistant Abdel Karim al-Iryani. Ambassador began by providing Qirbi with a detailed readout of FBI Director Mueller's meeting with President Saleh earlier the same day. Qirbi expressed satisfaction with the discussion, noting that law enforcement cooperation with the United States would remain a major Yemeni interest for the foreseeable future. Ambassador urged Qirbi to see that Yemen is well represented at the upcoming economic forum in Amman and the September judicial reform conference in Manama.

Policy Dialogue with the USG

¶13. (C) Qirbi said he had been reflecting on his recent discussion with Ambassador about travel to Washington. In the aftermath of both Operation Iraqi Freedom and Yemen's April parliamentary elections, he said it was "high time" to initiate substantive talks with the USG about future developments in the region. He said he wanted to make Yemen a positive element in U.S. strategic thinking about the region, including both Iraq and Israeli-Palestinian peace efforts. Of particular importance, he said, was U.S. cooperation with Yemen and other countries in the region -- especially the GCC states -- to build regional security. The time is past, argued Qirbi, when Yemen or any other country in this region, can think of its own security to the exclusion of broader security in the region. Qirbi suggested that the effort should address Iran as well. Referring to his talks with Iranian officials during the recent OIC meeting in Tehran, he reported that the "Iranians think they are reaching out to you but you are ignoring them."

¶14. (C) The FM commented that it could make sense for him to visit Washington together with Interior Minister Alimi, as this would provide for a broader base of bilateral discussions, including detailed talks on CT cooperation -- including U.S. assistance for the Yemeni Coast Guard, which falls under Alimi's authority.

U/S Bolton's Visit: Article 98; DPRK

¶15. (C) Ambassador characterized the upcoming visit of U/S Bolton (now set for June 16-18) as a golden opportunity for the ROYG to reach a successful outcome on Article 98. He briefly reviewed the positive examples set by Jordan, Egypt, Kuwait and Bahrain and noted that the Egyptian model -- based on a simple exchange of notes -- might readily be adapted for Yemen. Iryani confirmed that Qirbi's office had received copies of the Egyptian notes from the Embassy earlier in the week and were actively studying them. The Ambassador made a strong pitch for Qirbi to take personal ownership of the issue for Yemen and work it to conclusion in advance of U/S Bolton's visit. Qirbi said he would coordinate with the Embassy over coming weeks toward this end.

¶16. (C) Ambassador also advised the FM that U/S Bolton would raise Yemen's cooperation with North Korea, a very sensitive and important subject for the USG. Recalling previous discussions of the subject, Ambassador urged Qirbi to

postpone any actions or decisions on further interaction with the DPRK -- including planned port improvements -- before discussing the issue with U/S Bolton. He reiterated the recommendation that Yemen seek an acceptable alternative, perhaps engineering/construction firms from Eastern Europe. Qirbi welcomed the advice and said he looked forward to successful discussions with U/S Bolton.

Economic Reform Meeting in Amman

¶ 7. (C) Ambassador urged Qirbi to ensure that the ROYG is well represented at the upcoming WEF meeting in Amman. The FM acknowledged the importance of the meeting and said Yemen would take part.

Judicial Reform Meeting in Manama

¶ 8. (C) In response to urging that Yemen also attend the September Bahrain meeting on judicial reform, Qirbi expressed regret at the new Justice Minister's decision not to attend a judicial reform conference in South Korea. By September he will be well settled in, so Yemen should be well represented in Manama. Qirbi acknowledged that judicial reform, especially in the areas of commercial contracts and land tenure, was desperately needed in Yemen.

Terrorist Financing/Sheikh Moayed

¶ 9. (C) Qirbi said he was pleased the Moayed case had come up in the FBI Director's discussions in Aden. He said the ROYG remained deeply concerned over the domestic implications of the case and was attempting to mitigate the impact of a possible German decision to extradite Moayed to the United States. Many people are convinced he is innocent, said Qirbi. The Ambassador noted Moayed's popularity in Sanaa, but urged Qirbi to draw attention to the integrity of both the German and U.S. legal systems. Moayed will receive due process, and should cooperate with U.S. investigators in uncovering the network of terrorist financing in the United States, said the Ambassador.

¶ 10. (C) The Ambassador also noted the financing issue as an appropriate way for states of the region, including Yemen, to show support for President Bush's high profile effort to foster Israeli-Palestinian peace. Since the USG had recently designated the al-Aqsa Foundation, both in Yemen and elsewhere, as a terrorist financing entity, the ROYG should now seek not only to shut off any remaining channels of monetary support for Palestinian extremist groups but also to designate and support a legitimate channel for Yemenis to support Abu Mazen and the Palestinian Authority as it embarks on a difficult peacemaking effort. Qirbi said the ROYG would follow up accordingly.

MISENHEIMER